

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2006**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Walter A. Alcorn, At-Large
John R. Byers, Mount Vernon District
Frank A. de la Fe, Dranesville District
Kenneth Lawrence, Providence District
Rodney Lusk, Lee District

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District

STAFF PRESENT:

Fred Selden, Director, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning
(DPZ)
Leanna Hush, Planner, PD, DPZ
Barbara J. Lippa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk, Planning Commission Office

OTHERS PRESENT:

SEE ATTACHMENT A

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Chairman Walter A. Alcorn convened the meeting at 7:35 p.m. in Conference Rooms 106/107, Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

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Chairman Alcorn noted that this was the second meeting of the committee which had been formed at the direction of the Board of Supervisors for the purpose of developing a definition and guiding principles for transit-oriented development (TOD) for inclusion in the County's Policy Plan. He said the first order of business was approval of the minutes of the May 24, 2006 meeting.

Commissioner de la Fe MOVED THAT THE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MAY 24, 2006 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Chairman Alcorn noted that due to difficulties scheduling speakers for the Saturday, June 24, 2006 meeting, it was being cancelled. He said the July 6, 2006 meeting would be extended from

7:00 p.m. to 10: 00 p.m. in Conference Rooms 2 and 3 of the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, to accommodate more speakers and that additional meetings could be scheduled if necessary.

Chairman Alcorn reviewed the agenda for tonight's meeting, a copy of which is in the date file, and introduced Stewart Schwartz, Executive Director, Coalition for Smarter Growth.

Mr. Schwartz distributed a Urban Land Institute (ULI) publication entitled "Barriers and Incentives to Transit-Oriented Development," which examined TOD activities in Prince George's County, Maryland, Prince William County, Virginia and the District of Columbia. (A copy of the report is in the date file.)

Mr. Schwartz presented a TOD overview, via a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which is in the date file, and highlighted the following:

- Vacant and underutilized land should be considered for a pedestrian friendly mixed-use development with bus and rail transit, public parks, and green spaces;
- Urban revitalization and transit-oriented development reduces the number of vehicle trips, miles, and time spent traveling and increases highway speed;
- Balanced jobs and housing result in less traffic and air pollution;
- Arlington County is an example of successful TOD – Metrorail catalyst for development; density concentrated around stations; adjacent residential neighborhoods preserved;
- TOD opportunities are present in Fairfax at Metro stations: Huntington, Franconia/Springfield, West Falls Church, Dunn Loring/Merrifield, Vienna;
- There is demand for mixed-use/walkable communities by empty nesters, single persons, retirees, couples without children, and young adults.
- Parking controls: parking must be limited in TOD development and is important in managing demand; solutions include street parking, metered parking, shared parking, incentive programs.
- Transportation Demand Management – includes street design, connectivity, and market incentives to encourage walking, biking, using mass transit.

Mr. Schwartz recommended the book by Peter Calthorpe, *New American Metropolis*, which advocates moderate and high density housing, public uses, jobs, retail, and services concentrated in mixed-use development with walkable environments at strategic points along the regional transit system; organized growth; commercial, parks and civic uses within walking distance of transit stops; pedestrian friendly street networks; mix of housing types, densities, and costs;

preservation of sensitive habitat; public spaces focus of building orientation; and encouragement of infill and redevelopment along transit corridors.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lawrence, Mr. Schwartz said each of the referenced publications would be included in a bibliography, which Chairman Alcorn requested to be posted on the website.

Highlighting *New Transit Town*, Mr. Schwartz noted that a performance-based definition of TOD includes: **location efficiency** – density transit, accessibility, and pedestrian friendliness; **a range of housing options** to include affordable and workforce housing; **value capture** – for citizens, developers, local governments, and transit agencies; **place making** – safety, comfort, variety, attractiveness, distinctive; **resolution of tension between node and place** – access, including walking, bus feeder service; and **bicycling** balanced with types of stations, transit, and densities.

Typologies also from *New Transit Town* that were cited: Urban downtown – K Street, Washington, D. C.; urban neighborhood – DuPont Circle, Rosslyn, and Ballston; suburban center – Rosslyn, Ballston; suburban neighborhood – East Falls Church; neighborhood transit zone – focused on transit with lower density; commuter town – small town on edge of transit area with mixed-use development.

Mr. Schwartz also cited the presentation by Jeffrey Tumlin, Nelson/Nygaard, to the Tysons Task Force, which had advocated limiting traffic, rather than development, through transportation demand management (TDM) requirements, parking controls, and adjusting trip generation analysis of traffic models which were often not adaptive to transit-oriented development.

Responding to a question from Chairman Alcorn, Mr. Schwartz said there was an "urbemis" model adaptation done by Mr. Tumlin and others at Nelson/Nygaard, which made finer adjustments to standard trip tables for a mix of uses other than what was used by transportation consultants such as Wells and Associates.

Commissioner Lawrence commented that ITE data had been used to modify formulas for trips generated by different housing types, but it was possible that the number of trips could be overstated. Mr. Schwartz said it was important to attract the one-car or no-car households, i.e., people who wanted to drive less, and that was a component of marketing. He commended the TDM report done for the Vienna Metro development which included TDM options and how to evaluate their effectiveness.

Mr. Schwartz said the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, located in Arlington, allocated transit grants for this area. He explained that the Council of Governments for the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area did not have a large pool of funds which could be allocated

for TOD. However, he said under the new Federal transportation law, more planning dollars would become available and it would be worth discussing the creation of incentive funds for TOD implementation.

In response to a comment by Anders Warga, GTGCA, Mr. Schwartz said there were advantages of TOD at the village scale, a medium density scale for different corridors, and investment in bus and regional transit as well. He pointed out transit problems included morning and evening rush hours and the need for non-work trips such as to day care centers, dry cleaners, video and grocery stores, etc. He said one way to address traffic problems in the County would be to map neighborhoods with walking and bicycle paths to these services that could be reached within a ten to fifteen minute walk.

Dennis Frew, Fairfax County Non-Motorized Transportation Committee, commented that approximately 150 people traveled by bicycles to the East Falls Church Metro Station daily. Mr. Schwartz said that more people would bike if there were safe bicycle lanes and lockers available at stations. He said some places in Europe had covered bike stations which were monitored, some of which had repair facilities. He said Union Station was scheduled to have a bike station in the near future.

In response to a question from John Ulfelder, West*Group, Mr. Schwartz said some of the most contentious issues experienced by other jurisdictions had included: density; traffic generation; connectivity; cut-through traffic; parking; architecture and design; and attracting and keeping small local businesses. He explained that some of these issues could be addressed by appropriate density; TDM; a mix of uses; community design to allow walking and biking to transit stations; maximization of onstreet parking; neighborhood parking permit programs; and ground floor condominiums for retailers.

Responding to a question from Chairman Alcorn, Mr. Schwartz said the most important elements of TOD, in his opinion, were street design; pedestrian-friendliness and connectivity; parking and TDM; and great public spaces.

Commissioner de la Fe commented that often public spaces belonged to private organizations, such as homeowners' or business associations and asked Mr. Schwartz if development and maintenance of public spaces could be funded by government. Mr. Schwartz suggested looking at developments which had included public spaces, such as the Carlyle development in Alexandria, to learn how such public spaces had been financed. Mr. Schwartz said perhaps community town greens might work best as public spaces while a pocket park could be privately maintained but accessible to the public.

Dave Edwards, County resident, pointed out that often transportation hubs had been formed due to the inter-connection of major arterial roadways. Mr. Schwartz said the best way to avoid this problem was through design in the planning stage, although he acknowledged that it was too late in many instances. He noted that there was a national movement called "complete streets" which recommended that transportation departments design streets for all appropriate uses. He said

there were a number of innovative redesigns for street networks that could also be pedestrian-friendly. He pointed out that Washington, D. C., especially Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues, was an example of good street design and noted that Nelson/Nygaard recommended the work of Glatting Jackson, an urban design and transportation firm, as one of the best resources for pedestrian friendly street design. He said that in view of the fact that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) liked to set aside money for widening roadways, perhaps it could be encouraged to reprogram funds to create safe medians and a boulevard feel increasing pedestrian safety at the surface level. He said that the redesign of Routes 123 and 7 in the Tysons area would be necessary for transit-oriented development.

Chad DuBeau, Trammell Crow Residential, commented that design seemed to be the most important principle to reduce car trips. Mr. Schwartz said in addition to design, the parking policy was also very important as were transit benefits for both residents and employees. He also pointed out that car sharing programs, such as Zipcar and Flexcar, were also essential and had been effective in reducing cars trips in Arlington and Washington, D. C.

Deborah Smith, with FairGrowth, noted that one of the major problems with the Vienna Metro development had been the lack of coordination by the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) and VDOT. Commissioner Byers noted that the redesign of the King Street Metro Station in Alexandria had eliminated about two-thirds of parking which forced people to use public transportation or cabs to utilize that station.

Ms. Smith said she had been trying for years to get a pedestrian crossing light on the north side of the Vienna Station without success and asked if there were examples of other jurisdictions that had been more successful in coordinating TOD efforts. Chairman Alcorn said it would be helpful if Mr. Schwartz could provide examples of coordination in other jurisdictions.

In response to a question from Peter Rosen, Lerner Enterprises, about incentives for developers to create TOD, Mr. Schwartz said Arlington County had changed its general land use plan which created entitlement without rezoning. He said another incentive could be a split rate property tax where the tax on the land was increased and the tax on buildings and improvements was lowered. Mr. Schwartz added that a land value tax had worked in the revitalization of Pittsburg and Harrisburg in Pennsylvania, but although it had been authorized a few years ago for the City of Fairfax, it had not been used. Mr. Rosen pointed out that in Fairfax County a developer was often required to dedicate land for mass transit and at the same time contribute funds for road improvements. He suggested that the money for road improvements could be put to better use if it was used to encourage TOD. Mr. Schwartz responded that VDOT's approach to street and urban design needed to be sensitive to transit accessible areas.

Lewis Grimm, Franklin Farm Foundation, commented that the group needed to keep in mind that many street systems in the Washington, D.C. area had existed long before the advent of Metro rail. He said it would be a challenge for Fairfax County to implement a policy based on a denser street system that did not exist. He said the Institute of Transportation Engineers had recently published a draft of design guidance for context sensitive design for urban streets which could be downloaded at www.ite.org. He pointed out that an arterial roadway with the same classification

could look much different depending upon where it was located; i.e., downtown, the edge of the downtown area, or in a suburban area. He cited Connecticut Avenue as such an example.

Commissioner Lawrence said a proper grid of streets at and around all of the planned and future rail stops along the Tysons and Dulles corridor was fundamental to placemaking, similar to the Ballston/ Rosslyn corridor. Mr. Anders said he had assessed the proposal for the Moorefield Station development in Loudoun County and the concept which had evolved was a very dense grid of streets and not what you typically see in a suburban jurisdiction.

Mr. Schwartz agreed that street grid was critical. As an example, he said the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission in Albemarle County was trying to fix the theme created when Route 29 had become a ten lane highway with strip shopping centers. He said planners were trying to take 30,000 cars, making local trips, off the main stem by creating a grid with parallel roads. He said an ITE study was being done with the Congress of New Urbanism to determine if a different approach to street design could be developed. He said VDOT allowed street classifications to trump context sensitive design.

Paul Kraucunas, VDOT, said it was unfortunate that many of the current and planned Metro stations were at grade in the middle of huge car corridors which was an impediment to walkability. He asked if other jurisdictions had been able to use air rights over major roadway corridors to provide diverse uses closer to transit stations. Mr. Schwartz said there had long been a concern about putting the Dulles rail station in the middle of right-of-way, but that he did not know if air rights were economically viable given the amount of land that was commercially zoned, the tax base, and security issues. Commissioner Lawrence commented that he knew of only one development outside Atlanta, known as Lindburg, which had air rights but he did not know how well it had worked. Mr. Schwartz said he did not like the look of that development because it was an unfriendly intense development.

Mr. Edwards said the establishment of a grid system of streets would be a major undertaking in the Dulles highway corridor. Mr. Schwartz agreed and pointed out that Dennis Leach, formerly with TransManagement, Inc., and who now worked for Arlington County, had given a presentation for *New Transit Town* documenting different mode sharing; i.e., walking, biking, carpooling, and driving at the Rosslyn Metro Station compared to the four stations beyond it. He said locating a station in the middle of the right-of-way remained a big challenge.

Ms. Smith pointed out that in spite of planning and zoning, often it was difficult to achieve development as envisioned due to infrastructure requirements which often made a project unaffordable or resulted in a change of use. Mr. Schwartz said setting aside too much land for commercial development could undermine the market for TOD. He said another way to make a project more affordable was to reduce parking, noting that below-ground parking presently costs about \$30,000 a space. Ms. Smith pointed out that in some cases developers could not get financing without providing parking. Mr. Schwartz said this issue was being worked on with the finance community to help them understand the benefit of financing mixed use development with different parking schemes. He explained that since time was money for developers, the timeliness of the community input, design coding, and a streamlined administrative approach

were also effective ways to reduce costs. Ms. Smith commented that project phasing was also important.

Susan Turner, McLean Citizens Association, said construction should be contingent upon the implementation of a grid system with narrow streets, wide sidewalks, and bike paths. In response, Mr. Schwartz said a jurisdiction could create a form-based code and specify where the streets should be located. He said, however, that in some cases this method could be too prescriptive if a new developer became involved or if the market changed, but at a minimum, standards of connectivity should be established, including block sizes and the number of street and pedestrian connections. Ms. Turner pointed out that in an area such as Tysons there was not a lot of land for residential development. Mr. Schwartz said that along Route 7 in Tysons where big companies and auto dealerships were currently located would be an excellent place to create a grid of streets.

Tim Sargeant, South County Federation, said he was aware of the concern about the over capacity of the Metro Orange line and asked Mr. Schwartz to comment on the ability of Metro to handle TOD. Mr. Schwartz said that in addition to the need for funding, more cars could be added to the Orange line; the Blue line could be connected to the Yellow line, which had more capacity; the Rosslyn tunnel and downtown stations could be upgraded to reduce crowding; redundancy could be created through bus transit and bike lanes; office development could be increased at the Vienna station; and reverse commuting could be encouraged.

Mr. Warga remarked that there was an implicit requirement for a land use policy to concentrate commercial and office development in transit areas which could result in rezoning. Chairman Alcorn replied that although the Comprehensive Plan contained language supporting development around transit station areas, it did not have guiding principles for TOD such as when rezoning would be appropriate and recommendations for a street grid system and the walking distance from a station. He noted that this effort would not focus on site specific development and that the guiding principles would not necessarily be applicable in every situation.

Ms. Hooper suggested that perhaps a guiding principle could be flexibility to recognize differences between sites with the ability to manipulate factors such as parking, station distance, and density.

Chairman Alcorn noted that industry representatives and environmentalists had been identified to address the group and said he thought it was also very important to hear from citizens too. He suggested one session could be a citizens' panel to gain the perspective of those residents who had been and might be impacted by TOD.

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Leanna Hush, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning presented an overview of the Comprehensive Plan recommendations around the six existing Metro stations in the County which included a summary and aerial photographs. She said it was important for everyone to

have the same background about Area Plans for those stations and to recognize the differences among them. (A copy of her presentation is in the date file.)

Commissioner Lawrence pointed out that on the map of the Dunn Loring-Merrifield Metro Station area, the recommended FAR on one side of Gallows Road was 1.0 and on the other side it was 2.25. He said this was an example of a barrier, Gallows Road, to access the station which influenced the Plan density.

Ms. Hush noted that the area around the Van Dorn Station, planned for a mix of uses up to 1.0 FAR, was an example of a roadway (the Beltway) being a barrier to station distance. Responding to a question from Chairman Alcorn, Fred Selden, Director, PD, DPZ, said this recommendation had been in the Plan for quite some time and was modified in 1998-1999. He said mixed-use development south of the Beltway was recommended; therefore both a roadway and pedestrian connection would be necessary to provide access.

Mr. Selden pointed out that when the development in the area around the Springfield/Franconia Metro had been changed from medium density residential to retail, a proffer had required the construction of a brick wall to prevent people from cutting through the surrounding residential neighborhood to get to the Metro Station. He said this was an example of a barrier to connectivity that would have to be taken into consideration.

Ms. Smith noted that a community had supported the Vienna Metro development because Pulte had proffered a gated wall next to the Metro station. Chairman Alcorn said that was not unique to transit station areas.

Mr. Grimm said that the parking garage at the Springfield-Franconia Station had been built but the map showed it as proposed. Mr. Selden said a formal Plan amendment process was necessary to change the map.

Mr. Selden pointed out that in some cases roadways were a barrier to connectivity and in some cases, such as the Huntington Metro Station, topography was a barrier.

An unidentified speaker said transit stations could become more accessible if roads were improved and shoulders were paved.

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Chairman Alcorn noted that the next meeting would be held on July 6, 2006, from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m., in Conference Rooms 2 and 3 of the Government Center. Ms. Hush said the following presentations would be scheduled at that time:

- Patricia Nicoson, President, Dulles Corridor Rail Association
- Jim Snyder, retired Planning Section Supervisor of Master Planning and Development, Arlington County

- Representative from Maryland National Capital Park and Planning, Montgomery County, Maryland
- Jeff B. Speck, Director of Design, National Endowment for the Arts and co-author of *Suburban Nation*.

Chairman Alcorn said hopefully other speakers could be scheduled for the meeting to be held on July 26. Other suggestions for speakers included members of the Riders Forum (created by Metro); Steven Pastorkovich, a citizen, and Jim Zimmerman, Arlington County.

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The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.
Walter A. Alcorn, Chairman

For a verbatim record of this meeting, reference may be made to the audio recording which can be found in the Office of the Planning Commission of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: July 26, 2006

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission

Attachment:
List of attendees

Attachment A

**ATTENDEES AT FIRST MEETING OF TRANSIT-ORIENTED
COMMITTEE, JUNE 8, 2006**

Name	Organization
Walter Alcorn, Chairman	Planning Commissioner
Ault, Greg	EDAW, Inc.
Baker, Searcy	Diamond Properties
Byers, John	Planning Commissioner
Byrnes, Bill	MCA Transportation
De la Fe, Frank	Planning Commissioner
DuBeau, Chad	Trammell Crow Residential
Duvall, Sara	Cooley Godward
Edwards, Dave	
Frew, Dennis	Trails Committee
Grimm, Lewis G.	Franklin Farm Foundation
Gunn, Roland	NAIOP
Hooper, Fran	Homeowner
Hush, Leanna	Department of Planning and Zoning
Koch, Stella	EQAC
Kraucunas, Paul	VDOT
Lawrence, Kenneth	Planning Commissioner
Lawrence, Robert	Reed Smith LLP
Licamele, Greg	FFX Office of Public Affairs
Lippa, Barbara	Planning Commission Staff
Lusk, Rodney	Planning Commission
Ormsby, Sally	Land Use/Transportation Cmte.
Rathbone, Dan	FCDOT
Rodeffer, Linda	Planning Commission staff
Rosen, Peter	Lerner
Sargeant, Tim	So. Co. Federation of Citizens
Schwartz, Dave	
Selden, Fred	Department of Planning and Zoning
Smith, Deborah	Fair Growth
Stagg, Inda	Walsh Colucci
Turner, Susan	McLean Citizens Assn.
Ulfelder, John	West*Group
Warga, Anders	GTGCA
Zahm, Hillary	Cooley Godward